

Little Acorns Nursery at High Halden

Church Hill, High Halden, Ashford, Kent, TN26 3JB



Inspection date

4 June 2015

Previous inspection date

15 October 2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Good	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Requires improvement	3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Requires improvement	3
The setting does not meet legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- Staff deployment does not support children effectively in all areas of the environment. This is also a breach of the Childcare Register requirements.
- Staff do not fully recognise opportunities to support children's care and learning during snack times.
- Staff do not consistently use appropriate questioning techniques to enable children to identify solutions to simple problems.

It has the following strengths

- Staff offer a wide range of stimulating resources that support children's development in different areas of learning.
- Staff maintain a friendly, welcoming environment that encourages children to be active and independent during their play and learning experiences.
- Staff have developed exciting outdoor spaces that provide plenty of opportunities children to explore and extend their learning.
- Staff maintain a key-worker system that enables children to develop secure emotional bonds and therefore they feel safe in the nursery.
- The manager and committee evaluate all aspects of practice well and ensure that they recognise priorities for improvement and take appropriate action. This effectively improves the learning outcomes for children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- improve staff deployment to ensure that this consistently meets the needs of the children attending

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- review snack time routines to ensure that staff effectively support all children's care and learning
- develop staff's use of questioning techniques to ensure they consistently support children to overcome challenges.

To meet the requirements of the Childcare Register the provider must:

- ensure that a sufficient number of staff are present at all times to ensure the safety and welfare of children within all areas of the environment (compulsory part of the Childcare Register).

Inspection activities

- The inspector held discussions with the nominated person, committee chairperson and nursery manager.
- The inspector viewed a range of documentation including policies and children's learning and development records.
- The inspector observed adult-led and child-initiated activities within the inside and outside play spaces.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector discussed with parents and children the views about the nursery.

Inspector

Amanda Vidler

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is good

Staff promote children's learning and interests well and they have a good understanding of how children learn. Children explore the indoor and outdoor environment which helps to develop their confidence and independence. Staff promote children's learning effectively through play and activities. However, staff do not always fully engage those children not currently having their snack and occasionally miss opportunities to support all children's learning and care needs. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to observe children's achievements and development. This enables all children to make good progress in their learning and to develop effective skills for future learning. Staff carry out regular assessments and monitor children's progress. This helps to ensure that staff recognise and support individual needs. For example, staff consistently use simple strategies to support individual children's language and communication skills.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children requires improvement

Children are happy and settled. They quickly develop secure bonds with staff. This reflects in children's confidence as they actively seek support and enjoy chatting and playing with staff. Staff encourage children to achieve new things and offer assistance when required. For example, staff watch and praise children as they put on their own coats and give guidance when they ask for help. However, on some occasions staff do not consistently use strategies, such as questioning, to fully support children. Staff maintain close links with the local school, arranging visits and supporting events. This means that children are familiar with the teachers and environment, which helps to ensure a positive move to school. Staff are appropriate role models and they encourage turn taking and simple manners. They provide sound opportunities for children to manage and understand aspects of health and safety, including the importance of healthy eating and physical exercise.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision requires improvement

Leaders and staff are fully aware of their responsibilities to provide an environment which supports and promotes children's learning. However, on occasions the deployment of staff does not enable children to fully access or explore the available indoor and outdoor spaces. This means that staff miss opportunities to extend children's learning. Staff understand their roles in safeguarding children. They have a secure knowledge of relevant procedures for reporting any concerns about children's welfare. This promotes children's safety and well-being. Staff have appropriate qualifications and management supports and monitors staff to enable them to update and undertake further training. Staff reflect on their skills and knowledge to enable them to meet children's needs sufficiently. The management works with other settings, which enables them to share information and training opportunities.

Setting details

Unique reference number	127342
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	836214
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 8
Total number of places	29
Number of children on roll	24
Name of provider	Little Acorns Nursery at High Halden Committee
Date of previous inspection	15 October 2010
Telephone number	01233 850113

Little Acorns Nursery registered in 1993 and is located in the grounds of High Halden Primary School in High Halden, Kent. It is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 3.30pm, term time only, and offers morning, afternoon, full day and lunchtime sessions. The nursery employs five staff members. The manager and two other staff hold National Vocational Qualifications in childcare at level 3. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. The setting is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years of age

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